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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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**Great Lakes Beaches**

FORT MYERS, FL – Great Lakes beaches face a variety of beach management challenges. Loss of beach sand has accelerated due to harbor entrance jetties or lakefills trapping or diverting sand offshore. Further, stabilization of coastal bluffs with seawalls and revetments has cut-off a natural source of sand from shore erosion.

Until people started building structures on the Great Lakes, beginning in the 1800's, most beach sand flowed freely along the coasts and beach erosion problems were minimal. "Today, large municipal or commercial structures that extend into the lakes a half mile or more interfere with the natural movement of sand along shore," says Charles Shabica, Ph.D., president of Shabica & Associates, Inc. of Northfield, Illinois. "A rule-of thumb is: the longer and higher the structure, the more sand that gets trapped or diverted."

Over the years, coastal experts have tried numerous approaches to solving the problems of sand loss and have found that different solutions work in different areas.

"We have learned that the Illinois shore of Lake Michigan and most of the other Great Lakes urban shores are sustainable with appropriate solutions that must be site-specific for each region," says Shabica.

Some of the solutions scientists and engineers have used and monitored over the years include constructed lakefills in heavily impacted areas; pocket beaches with sand-fill in moderately impacted areas; and beach nourishment on open stretches of naturally eroding coasts.

"A beach is like a garden," says Shabica. "If you don't tend to it, it will disappear. We must maintain our beaches to keep them in good condition."

Shabica explained the key to the success of the shoreline management program on the Great Lakes is that citizens recognize the value of safe and accessible beaches and are willing to pay for their design, construction and maintenance.

"It is equally important that state and federal regulatory agencies work closely with coastal scientists, engineers, citizens and municipalities to ensure long-term coastal stability and a high quality coastal environment," Shabica said.

For more information about shoreline management on the Great Lakes, visit [www.asbpa.org](http://www.asbpa.org).

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**ABOUT ASBPA**

Founded in 1926, the American Shore and Beach Preservation Association (ASBPA) represents the scientific, technical and political interests along the coast in an effort to shape national research and policy concerning shore and beach management and restoration. ASBPA strives to engage in a factual debate on coastal issues and economics that will foster sound, far-sighted and economical development and preservation of our beaches; thereby aiding in placing their beliefs within the reach of the largest possible number of people in accordance with the ideals of a democratic nation. For additional information about ASBPA, please visit [www.asbpa.org](http://www.asbpa.org).